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Storage in Your Home

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Storage in Your Home



Cooperative Extension Service
South Dakota State University
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Your home must have a storage place for everything you possess. Without this storage place it's almost impossible to have a tidy house. Storage makes it easier for you to find things you want and gives you more space for living. Storage also makes your housecleaning job easier.

Storage units you may find in a house include drawers, shelves, cupboards and closets. All of these collect a certain amount of soil over a period of time. They are easier to clean if you have covered the floors

of the units with removable or washable paper. You might use newspaper, paper from paper sacks or regular shelf paper. You may prefer an adhesive-backed, plastic-coated paper. The plastic-coated paper does not stain as readily as wood or metal and is easy to wash. Rubberized shelf matting is another possibility.

You can expand your storage space in several ways. Commercial units can be purchased or you can make similar units that give equally satisfactory results for little or no expense.

Removable Shelves

Removable shelves of different widths and heights are placed on a permanent shelf to give space for stacking things separately according to size or type. Instead of plates or bowls stacked on top of one another, which means you must move the whole stack to get what you want, you have a shelf for each size. A removable shelf is often useful in kitchen cupboards, linen closets and as a second shelf over a clothes closet.

Step Shelves

Step shelves may serve your needs better. They are a type of removable shelf with two or more extra shelves. They make it easier to reach and see things in a cupboard or closet. They are convenient for shoes, glasses, spices, cleaning supplies, and sewing supplies such as thread. Step shelves are also convenient for storing medicines.

Dividers

Trays and drawer dividers are useful for keeping items separated. Egg cartons can be used in several ways. They may be spray painted if you like a colorful treatment. The cup side of the carton is useful for tacks, nails, jewelry, and a variety of little things. The cover side of the carton can be used for silverware, thread, knives, can openers, and many other utensils in your kitchen. Egg carton covers also work nicely for storage of socks, mittens or gloves, scarves, hankies, combs and brushes, and other small personal articles. Cheese boxes, cigar boxes, some cookie packages and other small boxes are also handy containers.

Dividers for drawers can be made from stout cardboard, plywood, composition board, or other fairly thin but sturdy material. Your drawer dividers should

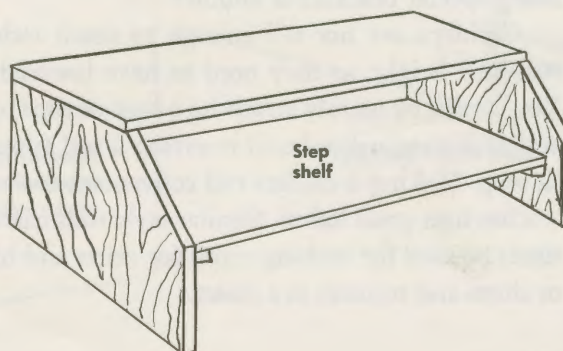
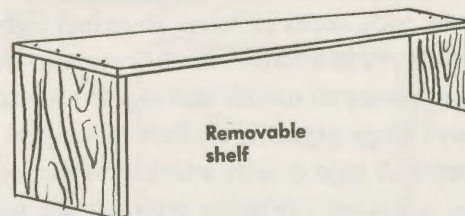
be designed to fit the supplies you intend to use. They might look similar to the illustrations or you may create your own design.

Racks

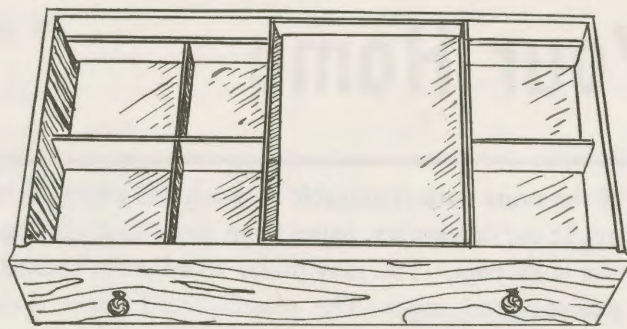
Racks are another form of useful storage. Racks are simple frame containers designed for hanging on doors or walls. Usually there is no back-board on a rack so the door or wall forms the back. Racks are convenient for spices, measuring cups and spoons, cooking implements, first aid supplies, cleaning supplies, pan lids, paper sacks, and baking pans. A rack might also consist of a simple 2x4 board nailed to the wall and equipped with screw hooks for hanging pots and pans or what-have-you.

Hooks and Towel Bars

Cups, cleaning tools and work or play clothes store more neatly on hooks. The hooks can be regular screw hooks for the cups and cleaning tools. It is easier on clothing if you use coat hooks or wooden dowels. Revolving hook racks can be purchased at

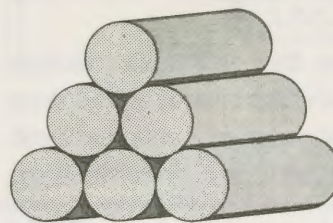
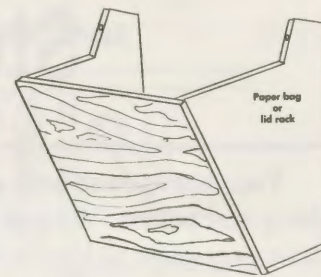
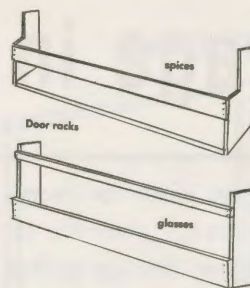
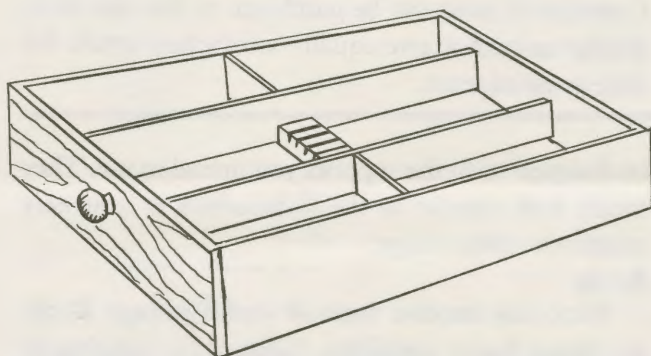


"Storage in Your Home" was prepared by Carol Jo Thompson, area home furnishings specialist, Cooperative Extension Service, South Dakota State University, Brookings, S. D. 57006. Various sources used for information and illustrations are hereby acknowledged.

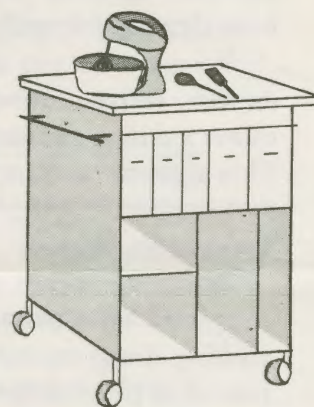


Drawer partitions and sliding tray

Drawer with knife rack.



Cans glued together



Storage cart

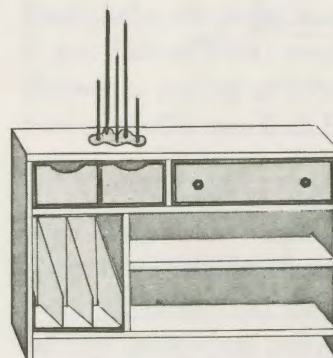
most variety and hardware stores. These take up less space so are good for hanging items in areas where space is limited.

Bathrooms and kitchens need towel bars or hooks. These can be clothes hooks, dowel hooks, chains, ropes, clothes hangers, curtain rods or special products designed for this purpose available at hardware and variety stores.

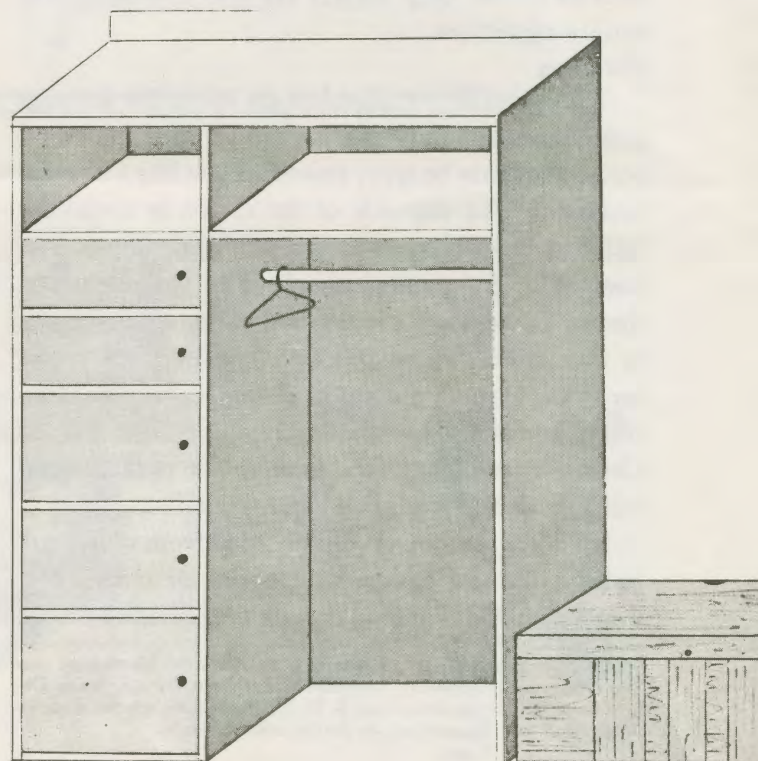
Closets

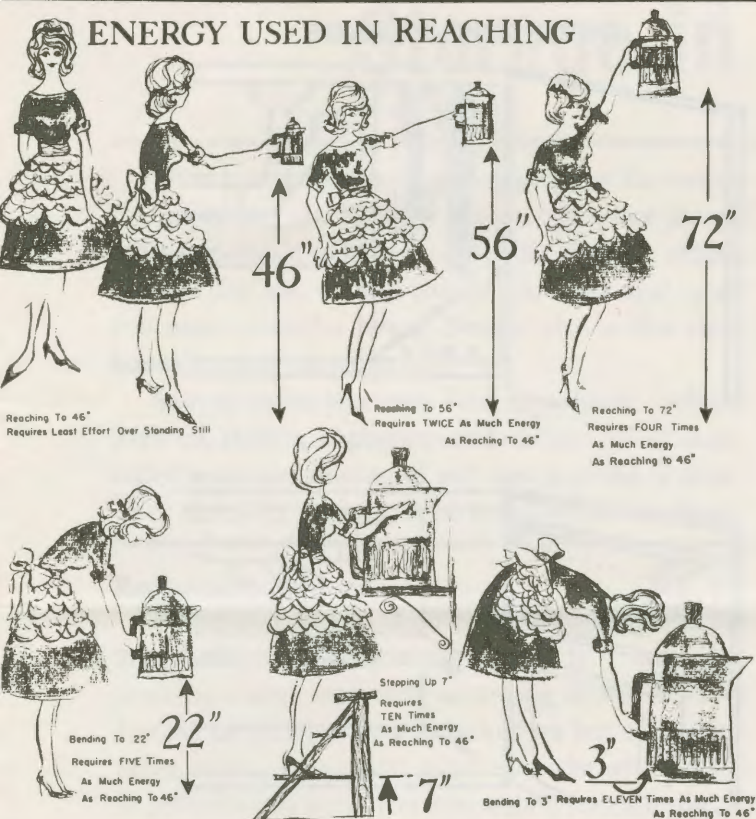
Bedrooms and entryways need closets for hanging clothes. Clothing which is hung up immediately after wearing stays much neater looking longer. This eliminates some extra pressing and enables a person to look better groomed. Rods can be old broom handles, dowels at least one-inch in diameter; expansion curtain rods, ropes or wires stretched tightly from one screw eye to another. Plastic rope and cloth rope have a tendency to stretch and sag. If rods are used over a very large expanse, it's best to support them with a brace. A rope or wire attached to the rod and anchored to a screw eye in the ceiling is one way of bracing, using special brackets is another.

Children are not tall enough to reach rods of a standard height, so they need to have lowered rods. You do this by merely attaching a loop of rope to each end of a standard rod and inserting a rod from loop to loop. Making a clothes rod convenient for a child teaches him good habits. Similar style rods can sometimes be used for making room for skirts and blouses or shirts and trousers in a closet.

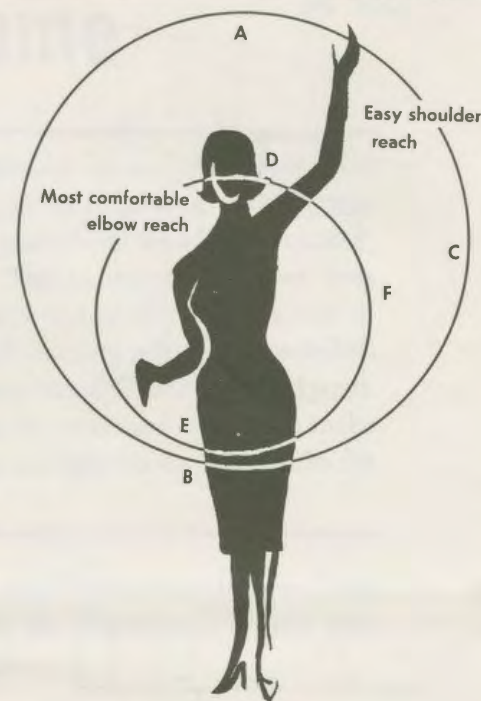


A board framework, cardboard "drawers" or dividers, an old broom handle . . . and you have a "closet" or a chest of drawers





To help conserve your time and energy, store most frequently used supplies and utensils where you can reach them comfortably without stretching or stooping. To plan storage, know your easy shoulder reach and your most comfortable elbow reach.



To measure for easy shoulder reach face the wall, standing about a foot from it. Take a pencil or chalk in your hand. Bend your fingers as

if reaching for a dish. Swing your arm from the shoulders to make the widest half circle you can on the wall. Make a dot at the highest point you can reach (A); at the lowest point as your hand comes back to your side (B); and at the distance of your side reach (C).

To measure for most comfortable elbow reach stand as you did for the shoulder reach but hold your elbow at your side and move your arm only from the elbow. Make a dot at the highest point of your reach

with rope and shellacing the rope for easy cleaning. Many cloth covered containers are advertised, however, unless the cloth cover is easily removed for laundering these are not very practical. Whatever covering you choose for these containers *must be washable*. The containers can be used as a single unit, a set such as cannisters, or the lids can be fastened to the underside of a cabinet or shelf with screws and the containers with whatever contents you wish then attached to the lids. These are handy for use yet are out of your way when you're working at that cabinet. Baby food jars are excellent for this purpose. It is also possible to attach jars or cans to a wall this way.

Another method of using these containers for storage is to glue the cans (all the same size) together. These might be used for magazines, newspapers, candles, electric cords, silverware, kitchen utensils, spray cans, tubes or what-have-you. The glued-together container may be made with the bottoms of the cans left on or removed, depending on which style will best suit your purpose.

Movable Containers

You can store items in chests, boxes or plastic bags which can be slid under a bed or behind a chair or davenport. Containers you plan to use behind or under another piece of furniture should be covered tightly, otherwise lint and dust will accumulate on the stored goods. Out-of-season clothing, extra bedding, shoes and toys are some items you might store this way. Clothing or blankets you are storing should have a few moth crystals inside the tightly closed container. (The odor of moth crystals does not penetrate the fabric as much as moth balls so it airs out more readily when you want to use the items again).

Do not store electric blankets in moth-repellent of any kind as fumes from the repellent damage wiring.

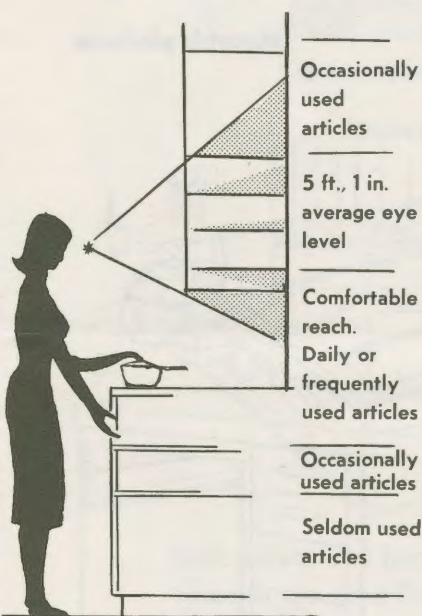
Metal, Plastic and Glass Containers

Small items such as buttons, safety pins, pins, nails, electric cords, pencils, crayolas, flour, cornmeal, raisins, powdered milk are nice to keep in tin cans, plastic or glass containers. Keeping food in covered containers helps keep it fresh and clean. Bugs and rodents are not likely to get into food kept in tin or glass containers. Plastic containers will usually keep bugs out but are not rodent proof. The containers can be left as they are or they may be decorated. You can decorate them by painting with lead-free enamel, covering with plastic-coated self-adhesive paper, wrapping

(D); at the lowest point as your hand comes back to your side (E); at the distance of your side reach (F).

Your reach in inches:

Point A _____ Point C _____ Point E _____
 Point B _____ Point D _____ Point F _____



Convenient storage heights for a home-maker 5 feet, 4 inches tall. The shaded areas cannot be seen.

To determine if your storage space is convenient and adequate, study the following questions. If you answer "yes" to all of the questions, you are an above average manager.

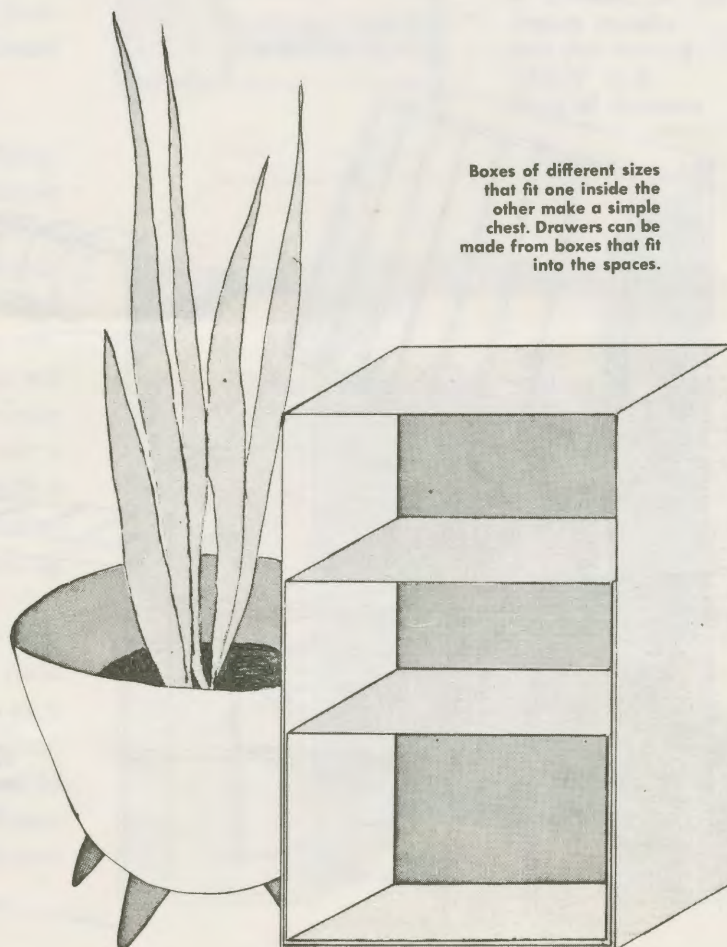
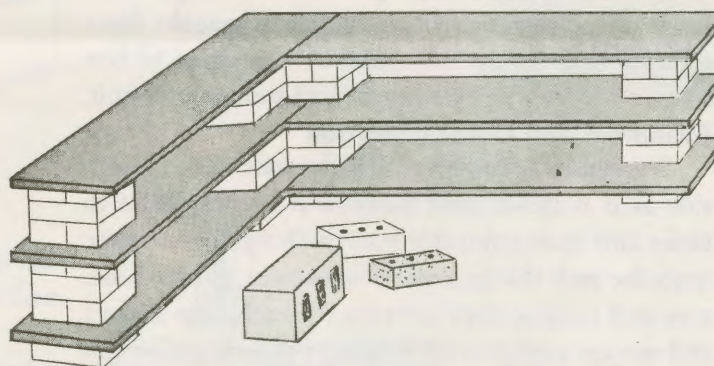
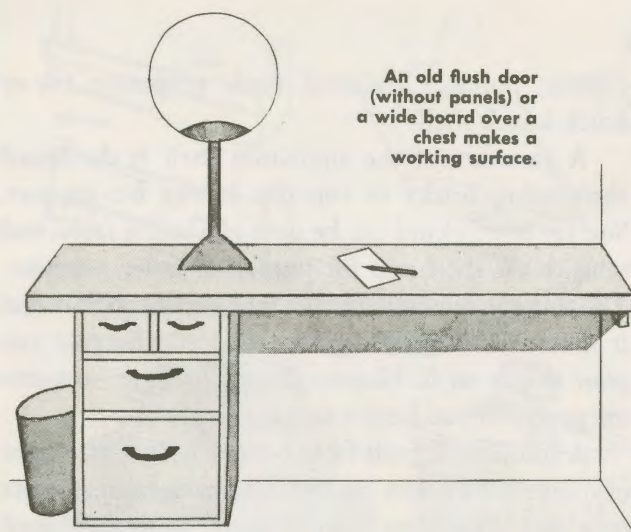
Is the article stored where it is first used? Can you reach it easily?

Can you grasp it easily? Can you remove the article without first moving something else? Can you see what you are looking for? Are you making use of all your space? Is the article used frequently? Is everything you are storing useful?

Boxes and Boards

Cardboard boxes the same size and shape can be placed side by side or stacked one on top of the other to make extra storage. Covering the boxes with wallpaper, self-adhesive paper, or enamel paint will make the units more attractive and easier to clean. If you glue each of the boxes together the unit will be sturdier. If you want to use a cardboard stack unit for heavy articles or books, it would be advisable to glue a thin piece of plywood, composition board or hardboard between each set of boxes. If you use boards between the boxes you can use boxes of different sizes and shapes, but be sure to glue each segment together so it is a solid unit.

Shelves can be made from nothing more than a board held up with angle-iron braces. The angle-irons come in numerous sizes from small to large and boards come in a variety of widths and thicknesses and can be purchased as long as you want. These shelves can be used for medicine or towels in the bathroom, as a laundry shelf, desk, eating counter, work



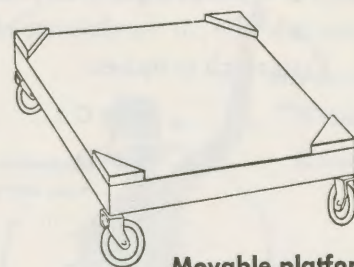
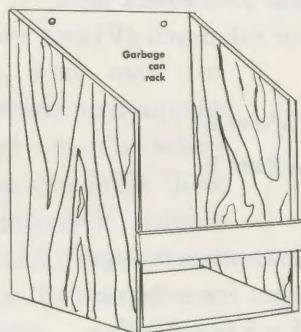
counter, portable TV shelf, book, magazine, toy or knick-knack shelf.

A variation of the angle-iron shelf is the board shelf using bricks or concrete blocks for support. Shelves of this kind can be used as a coffee table, end table, book shelf and for numerous other purposes. The thing to remember when making any shelf is that it must be strong enough to support whatever you plan to put on it. Heavier boards or more supports are needed if you have a sagging shelf.

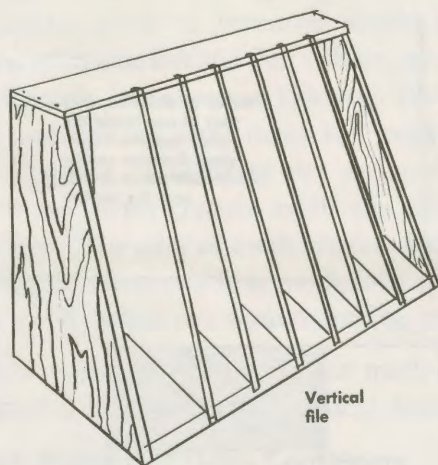
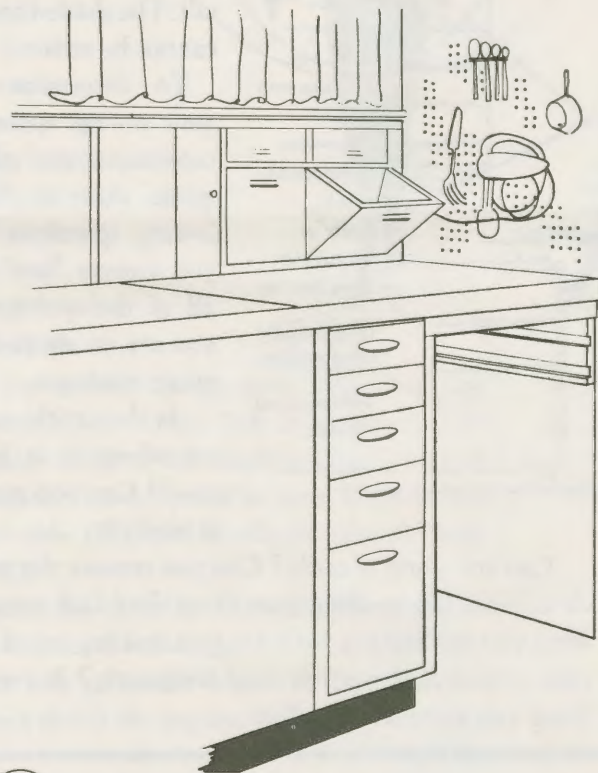
A framework built from boards can create a chest of drawers, a kitchen cabinet, a dressing table, a closet or a desk. "Drawers" can be made from cardboard boxes. You can put rope pulls on these, purchase screw-on pulls or merely cut an opening at the front for ease in grasping the container. Variation in box sizes can help give more organized storage in a unit.

Basement and Outside Storage

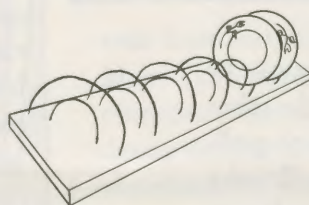
Storage is as important in the basement or outside as it is inside your home and it contributes to easier and more enjoyable homemaking. Plan storage space for such things as the lawnmower, garden hose, toys and tools so they are easy to reach. Use shelves and storage containers throughout your home so you have a place for everything.



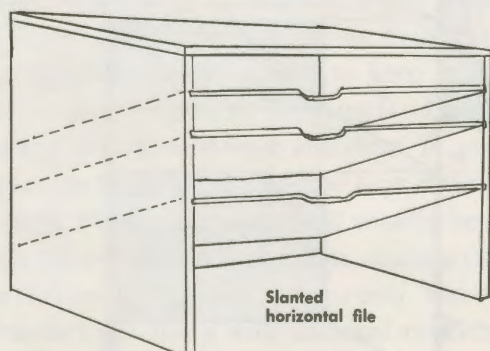
Movable platform



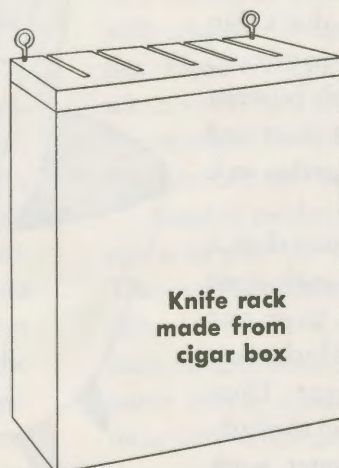
Vertical file



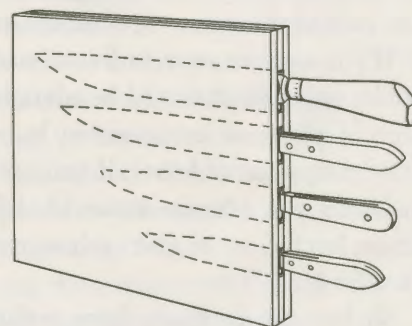
File made by inserting 9-gauge aluminum clothesline wire in holes 1 or 2 inches apart. Loops are 2 and 5 inches high.



Slanted horizontal file

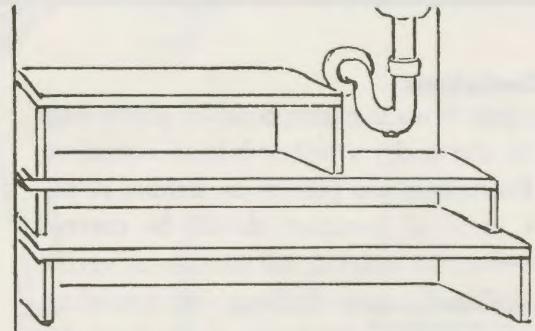
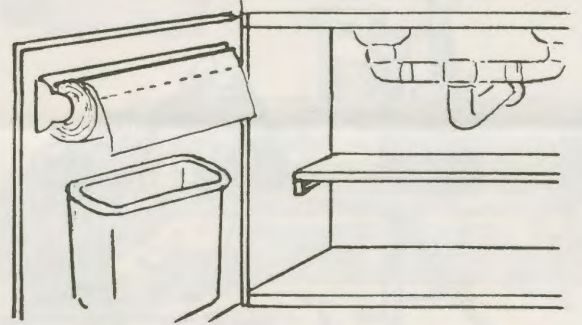
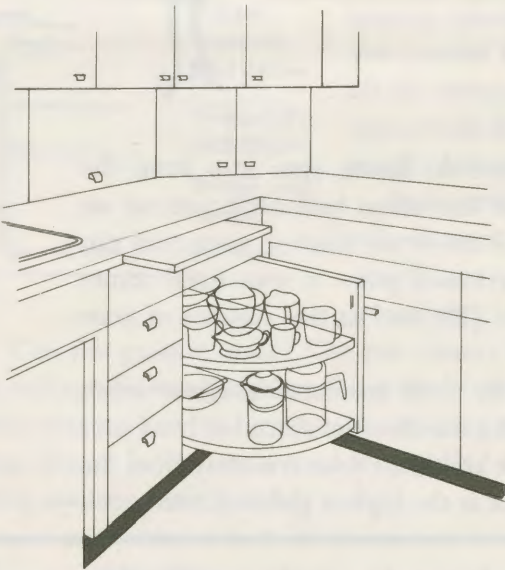
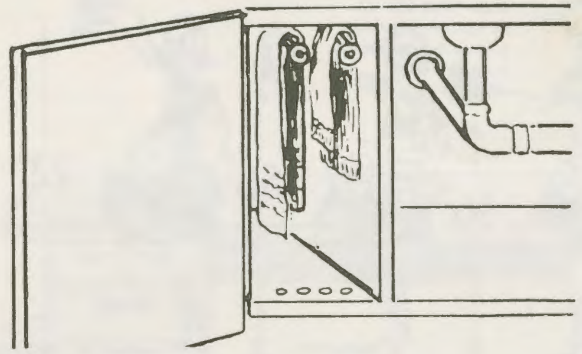
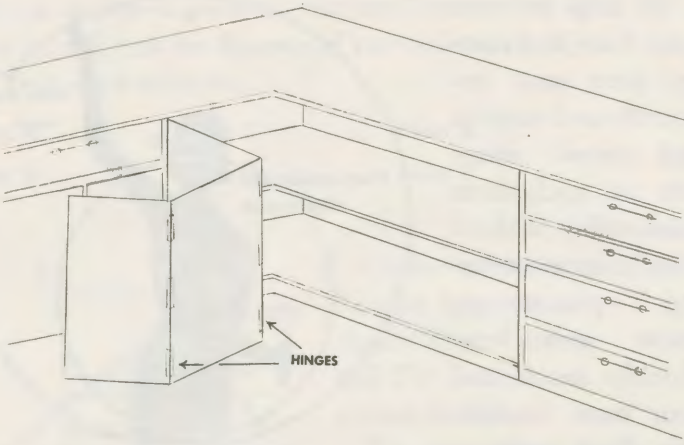


Knife rack made from cigar box

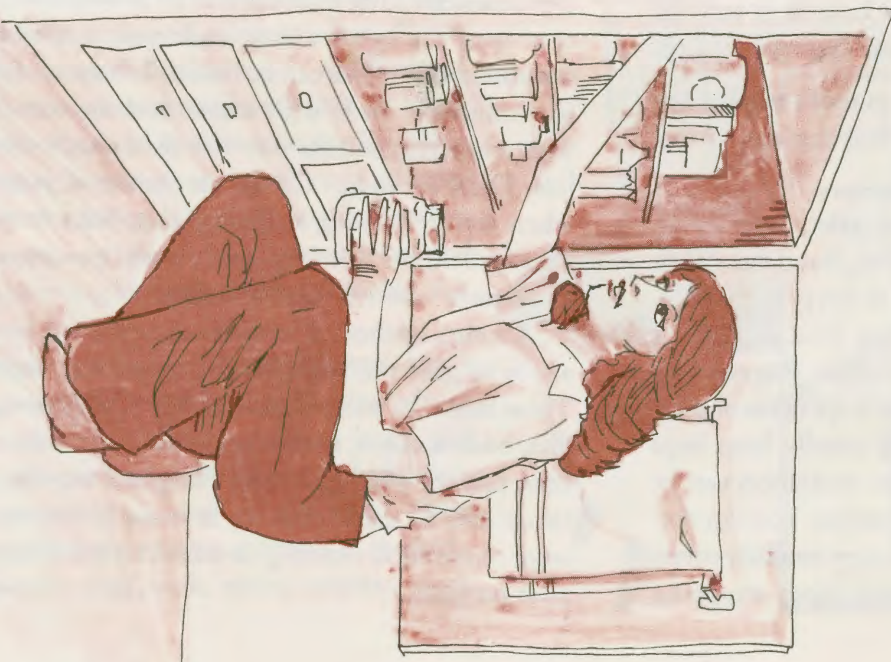


Plywood knife rack

UNDER SINK STORAGE



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